BENGALURU, THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 26 | Min 21 | Humidity 85% Light rain Sensex 82,634 | Nifty 25,212 | Gold 98,062 | Silver 1,11,927 | Dollar 85.83 | Euro 100.53 | GBP 115.64

OZONE ALERT

City recorded ozone levels exceeding permissible limits on 45 out of 92 days this summer — and that is not a good thing

PAGE 4

SHOE PINCHES

Footwear thefts rising, especially when it comes to top brands, with even CCTVs failing to deter culprits

PAGE 5

BM takes close look at cases where women are in the centre of high-profile financial crimes — from kitty parties, gold smuggling rackets to chit fund and crypto scams, they have got it all covered

ANTI-HEROINES TAKE THE STAGE

Women make up small fraction of those arrested, which makes their presence more noticeable

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

A few recent high-profile economic crimes have women playing the leading role in its execution, marking a flip in the stereotypical narrative. Recent cases, including a high-profile gold smuggling racket, the Kerala couples' chit fund scam, and now the kitty party investment fraud, point towards a complex trend where more women are playing roles in crimes involving crores of rupees.

A glaring example of this shift was seen in the recent cyber fraud case where a man, in search of a life partner, was duped of ₹44 lakh by a woman. According to officials, the fraud began when the victim who was searching for a life partner connected with a woman identifying herself as Archana on Instagram. Their casual chats soon became frequent and within days she introduced him to an alleged Bitcoin trading platform, promising large returns on small investments. Encouraged by fake profits, he kept transferring money in phases. When he tried to withdraw, he was asked to pay more to "unlock" his funds. Realising the scam too late, he filed a complaint with the Central CEN Crime Police.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

> **"Many of these cases are still under investigation. More research is needed to understand the reasons and situations that lead women to take part in white-collar crimes**
>
> — Police official

Plaza or park? Upkeep in offing

As BBMP finally floats tender for development of Mahatma Gandhi Park on MG Road, citizens puzzled by nomenclature, but want swift and sure work to be done

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Mahatma Gandhi Park continues to be neglected by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). If the condition of the well-known public space is anything to go by, it seems the BBMP officials, who conduct ritualistic visits to the spot on October 2 and January 30 and conveniently forget about its existence throughout the year, are yet to pull up their socks.

And what can we say about the BBMP engineers, who floated a tender inviting bidders for the development of Mahatma Gandhi Plaza on MG Road? How the name of Mahatma Gandhi Park became Mahatma Gandhi Plaza is anybody's guess.

Most Bengalureans are aware of the Mahatma Gandhi Park situated adjacent to M Chinnaswamy Stadium, but no one has a clue about Mahatma Gandhi Plaza on MG Road.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Fusion music

Known for his genre-defying sound, internationally acclaimed guitarist Oz Noy is performing with his trio, bringing a bold blend of jazz, funk, rock, and blues. **Where: Windmills Craftworks, Whitefield; When: July 18 and 19, 9.30 pm**

02 Innovative collaboration

AndPurpose Forums is hosting an evening of purposeful conversations and collective vision, bringing together a diverse community to explore themes that shape the future of purpose-led action, sparking dialogue and collaboration. **Where: Sabha Blr, Shivajinagar; When: July 24, 4 pm**

03 Musical merriment

Mika Singh, known for his countless iconic hit songs, is set to take the stage and mesmerise the audience with his lively music. **Where: ZOZO The Club, Sanjay Nagar; When: July 19, 7 pm**

04 Pun intended

As part of his India tour, Inder Sahani is bringing a show filled with relatable jokes, quick wit, and his impromptu skills. **Where: The Underground Comedy Club, Koramangala; When: July 18, 8 pm**

05 Sonic realm

A first-of-its-kind all-male pop opera will be premiering, bringing together over 100 male vocalists from across the city, creating a rich sonic landscape that redefines how musicals are experienced in India. **Where: Good Shepherd Auditorium, Shanthala Nagar; When: July 17 to 19**

Forest Ministry demands answers on encroachment

Since BU's Jnana Bharathi campus area is not classified as forest land, clarifications need to be sought from varsity itself, says Bengaluru Urban DCF

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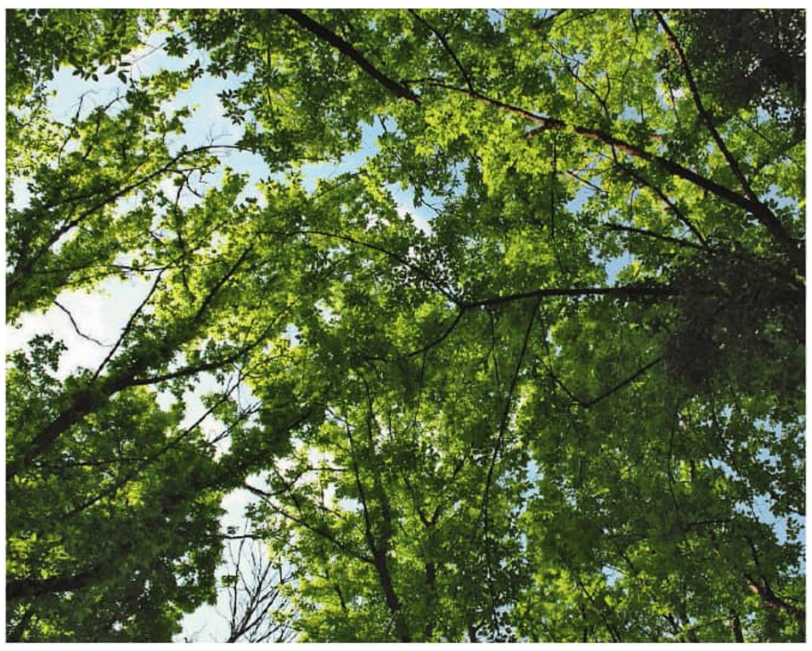
The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) summoned Bengaluru Urban Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) of the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) on Tuesday to address a complaint filed by a citizen regarding rampant land encroachment and illegal activities on Bangalore University (BU)'s Jnana Bharathi Campus.

The complaint by Sudharshan Reddy, filed with MoEF&CC on April 4, stated that despite repeated media coverage and evidence, Bangalore University authorities have failed to stop land encroachment on the campus.

In the complaint, Reddy highlighted that Jnana Bharathi campus is one of Bengaluru's last green zones, and a vital ecological space that supports diverse flora and fauna. "Unfortunately, it is now under threat due to rampant illegal land encroachment. Despite repeated media coverage and evidence, authorities have failed to stop these illegal activities. The forest area is being converted into unauthorised housing and commercial zones," added Reddy. Ravindra Kumar, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bengaluru Urban, confirmed that the Ministry has brought the matter to the notice of the Forest Department of Karnataka, and has forwarded the grievance to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests for necessary action.



The Ministry sought clarification from KFD after the matter raised in a citizen's grievance regarding rapid land encroachment at Jnana Bharathi campus, was not answered satisfactorily

"We have received the request as it falls under KFD jurisdiction. However, KFD will be informing the Ministry that it is not forest land and thus clarifications need to be sought from the varsity," said the DCF.

KFD, in its reply, also highlighted the significance of the green patches on the campus, which are rich in biodiversity.

Kumar noted that the campus is teeming with a variety of wildlife – both flora and fauna. "It is home to a number of species of butterflies, birds, and plants, apart from other animals. We also need to look into the possibility of declaring the green patches as 'forest' or 'deemed forest, '" added Kumar. In the Indian context, land with more than one hectare in area, and a tree canopy density of more than 10 per cent, irrespective of ownership and legal status, is defined as forest cover. Such land may not necessarily be a recorded forest area. Moreover, any plantation with the presence of 100 trees per hectare with a girth of more than 30 centimetres at breast height can be considered a factor in identifying a 'deemed forest'.

The Ministry sought clarification from the KFD after the citizen's grievance—regarding land encroachment—was not addressed satisfactorily, and no confirmation was received from the Karnataka Government about the actions taken in response.

331 estranged couples reunite

In a heartwarming outcome of the National Lok Adalat held across Karnataka, 331 estranged couples reconciled and chose to resume their marital lives. The day-long legal initiative, aimed at speedy and amicable resolution of disputes, saw the settlement of 1,756 matrimonial cases through mutual consent.

The state-wide drive led to the disposal of 58.67 lakh cases, including 3.11 lakh court-pending matters, with settlements and compensations amounting to Rs 2,878 crore. Addressing the media, Justice A Kameshwar Rao, Executive Chairperson of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA), said 1,022 benches were constituted across the state for the event. He announced that the next National Lok Adalat will be held on September 13.

A wide range of disputes were resolved, including 4,015 civil cases, 4,961 motor accident compensation claims worth over Rs 290 crore, 13,542 cheque bounce cases involving nearly Rs 572 crore, 456 land acquisition compensation matters worth Rs 64 crore, and 375 consumer disputes totalling Rs 406 crore. The Lok Adalat also cleared 2,689 long-pending cases, including some that had been dragging on for over 15 years. Notably, two criminal cases in Bengaluru dating back 28 and 27 years were settled through compromise at the 8th Additional Metropolitan Court.

Amongst the highest settlements was a Rs 40.66 crore compensation case in Dakshina Kannada. Other major settlements included Rs 1.75 crore, Rs 6.56 crore, and Rs 5.15 crore in Bengaluru. The successful conduct of the Lok Adalat highlights its growing relevance in reducing the burden on courts and delivering swift, accessible justice.

— BMB

Karnataka placed third in FRS implementation

Karnataka ranks third in the implementation of the Face Recognition System (FRS) introduced to ensure transparency in distributing nutrition kits to pregnant and lactating women through Anganwadi centres. As part of the Centre's POSHAN Abhiyaan, all states were instructed to adopt FRS, and Karnataka's Women and Child Development Department has been effectively rolling it out. The system ensures that food grains and funds from the Centre are allocated based on verified beneficiary data captured through FRS, linking Aadhaar, mobile numbers, and e-KYC to authenticate beneficiaries.

Currently, 81.64 per cent of Karnataka's 23.5 lakh beneficiaries have been enrolled into the system. The nutrition kits are provided monthly to registered women from pregnancy until the child turns six. Once a beneficiary's face is matched through the POSHAN Tracker, the kit is delivered, and an SMS confirmation is sent. The system aims to eliminate fraud and ensure that nutrition kits reach genuine beneficiaries. Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar emphasised that the primary goal is to prevent food diversion and ensure proper delivery to pregnant women, new mothers, and children under three.

— BMB

Cathedral High School to host Golden Jubilee Reunion for 1975-76 batch today

The 1975-76 batch of Cathedral High School will hold its Golden Jubilee Reunion on July 17, 2025, at the Catholic Club in Bengaluru. Classmates from different parts of India and other countries, including the US, Canada, Australia, and the Middle East, will come together to mark 50 years since their school days. The event will include music from the 1970s, old games, tributes to teachers, and a remembrance for those who are no longer alive. The reunion will also be live-streamed.

— BMB

Is the SSLC and II PUC third exam on its way out?

The Karnataka government is considering scrapping the third annual Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) and II Pre-University Course (PUC) exams, a system introduced only two years ago to provide students with multiple chances to clear their board exams. The Department of School Education has reportedly asked the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) to submit a detailed report on whether the third exam is truly necessary. Preliminary discussions suggest the majority opinion is that the third exam is not essential. Held typically in June or July, it faces logistical challenges due to heavy monsoons in regions like the coast and Malenadu, making it difficult for students to reach exam centres. Moreover, while the first exam offers centres at the hobli and village level, the third exam centres are usually at the taluk level, requiring students to travel up to 30 km. Participation in the third exam is low, and even fewer students pass. Those who do clear it often miss college admissions or Common Entrance Test (CET) deadlines, forcing them to settle for less-preferred courses.

However, some argue for retaining the third exam, especially as it benefits repeaters and private candidates who might not have cleared the previous two attempts. The board is currently preparing a pros-and-cons report to be submitted to the government, which will make the final decision. Meanwhile, the government is planning to implement a Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)-style exam system for SSLC. If introduced this year, the pass percentage could exceed 95 per cent in the first exam alone. With internal assessment marks counting and pass marks lowered from 35 per cent to 33 per cent, even students scoring 13 in the written exam and 20 internally can pass—potentially eliminating the need for a third exam altogether.

— BMB

Fraudster uses KYC info to access banking services

Woman loses nearly ₹5 lakh in credit card fraud; scammer accesses sensitive insider-level details

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A Bengaluru-based professional has lost nearly ₹5 lakh in a credit card fraud that she believes stemmed from a breach of her KYC (Know Your Customer) information during the card issuance process.

According to her complaint filed at the East Division's CEN Crime Police Station, the victim completed her KYC formalities through the bank's official platform. Within minutes of this process, she received a WhatsApp message from an individual posing as a bank relationship manager. The fraudster had access to highly specific details, including the exact credit card type issued to her, its activation status, and even the upgrade request she had made.

The impersonator sent her a link that appeared to be the official bank website and convinced her to cancel the card she had not requested. In reality, the scammer used the opportunity to activate mobile banking on her card, raise the transaction limit, and carry out three fraudulent transactions, two for ₹1.99 lakh each and another for ₹98,000, all without her knowledge or consent.

The transactions were routed to two recently registered companies in Maharashtra. Despite her immediate response, blocking the card and notifying the bank, the victim claims the bank delayed sharing transaction reference numbers, resulting in the loss of crucial time to stop the funds from reaching the scammers.

What has alarmed the victim is the level of insider information the fraudster possessed. "My account details appear to have been compromised right after I completed KYC formalities. Someone posing as a relationship manager contacted me on WhatsApp. This appears to be a data breach," she stated in her complaint.

She has since filed a report on the national cybercrime portal (cybercrime.gov.in) and escalated the matter to senior officials at the bank, demanding accountability and a deeper probe into how her sensitive information was accessed.

KYC misuse fueling cybercrime

A recent study on cybercrime and money mule networks highlights a growing pattern of abuse involving KYC data. Fraudsters are increasingly exploiting gaps in e-KYC verification to gain unauthorised access to banking services. According to the report, criminals are using stolen identity documents to create new accounts or revive dormant ones, a tactic now common in credit card and digital banking frauds.

One alarming revelation is the creation of shell companies using KYC details, which are then used to receive or launder stolen funds. While e-KYC has made onboarding faster, its vulnerabilities are being exploited, especially in banks where KYC and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) protocols are not rigorously enforced. In some instances, banking insiders have even been found to aid in the process of opening these mule accounts.

Uninvited guest steals from delegates

A man posing as a guest at an international workshop held at the Shangri-La Hotel has been arrested for stealing domestic and foreign currencies from participants' bags. The accused, Chintakindi Srinivasalu (57), hailing from Andhra Pradesh, was caught and found in possession of multiple foreign currencies with a total worth of ₹41,079.

Roger Nienpo Sheng, a participant of the APAC Group's APAC-2025 Annual Meeting held from June 21 to June 28, filed a complaint on June 23. He reported that $78,300 in US Dollars and 3,000 Taiwanese Dollars had gone missing from his belongings. DCP Akshay Machindra explained, "Whenever conferences with foreign delegates were held, he would track such events. He would then dress in formal attire to blend in as a participant. Taking advantage of moments when delegates left their bags unattended or were distracted, he would commit the theft." **–BMB**

HC nixes rape charges in relationship dispute

The Karnataka High Court has nullified legal proceedings concerning rape, abetment and cheating charges against a man, his mother and their neighbour, which were filed under the pretext of a marriage promise.

The woman, who had maintained a six-year relationship with the man, initiated legal action after marriage negotiations were unsuccessful.

The accused man from Bengaluru and the complainant shared a childhood friendship. Their romantic involvement began when he was 18. The woman subsequently married another person who later passed away.

Following her husband's death, they resumed their relationship, which continued for five more years.

Subsequently, marriage discussions between their families commenced but were unsuccessful. This led her to register a complaint at the Basaveshwara Nagar police station.

The police conducted investigations and submitted a charge sheet invoking IPC sections 376, 420, 323, 504 and 109.

The accused parties approached the high court to contest the proceedings. Their defence argued that a friendship evolving into a relationship cannot constitute an offence under IPC section 376 when marriage promises are unfulfilled. Justice M Nagaprasanna, referencing Supreme Court precedents, stated that the termination of a long-term relationship cannot be classified as rape under IPC section 376. The court determined that continuing proceedings based on the charge sheet evidence would constitute legal misuse. **–BMB**

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Spring ozone surge prompts warnings for public health

CSE finds Bengaluru recorded 45 ozone-exceedance days this summer—up 29%. Pollution now peaking earlier, with serious implications for health and agriculture

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Between March and May this year, Bengaluru has recorded a higher number of days exceeding the ozone standard, compared to the previous summer, an analysis conducted by the Centre for Science and Environment in New Delhi has highlighted.

As many as 45 out of 92 days this summer recorded ozone levels exceeding permissible limits, according to data from Bengaluru's air quality monitoring stations. This represents a 29% rise in high-ozone days compared to last summer. The worst day in terms of spatial spread was March 31, when four out of 14 monitoring stations reported levels above the standard threshold.

Hombegowda Nagar recorded the maximum number of days with high ozone levels (31 days), followed by Bapuji Nagar. A comparison of ozone levels in May 2025 and May 2024 shows a 28% drop in average hourly ozone peaks, indicating it no longer persists after sunset as it did last year. Daily trends reveal that higher NO_2 levels during morning and evening peaks help neutralize ozone. However, ozone concentrations rise during off-peak hours when NO_2 levels are comparatively lower, allowing it to accumulate more freely in the atmosphere.

May 2025 saw a 28% drop in peak ozone levels, with less persistence after sunset compared to last year

Experts say that exposure to ground-level ozone can inflame and damage the airways, increase susceptibility to infections, and worsen respiratory conditions such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema

Unlike primary pollutants, ozone is not emitted directly from any source. It is formed through chemical reactions involving nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and carbon monoxide (CO) - pollutants that are released by vehicles, power plants, factories, and other combustion sources. In the presence of sunlight, these substances undergo a series of cyclic reactions that result in the formation of ozone at ground level. VOCs also have natural sources such as vegetation, adding to the complexity. Ground-level ozone accumulates not only in urban environments but can also travel long distances, turning into a regional pollutant. It can impact agricultural productivity and threaten food security.

Experts say that exposure to ground-level ozone can inflame and damage the airways, increase susceptibility to infections, and worsen respiratory conditions such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. Children with underdeveloped lungs, older adults, and individuals with existing respiratory conditions are particularly vulnerable. Ozone exposure increases the frequency and severity of asthma attacks, often leading to higher rates of hospitalisation. In Bengaluru, ozone forms during both winter and summer, but this year's data shows a notable shift to spring (February–April), with a 31% rise compared to the same period last year. This trend suggests earlier ozone formation, likely driven by rising temperatures, stronger solar radiation, and potential changes in precursor emissions contributing to the seasonal shift. The analysis underlines that ozone is a regional pollutant that requires effective control at both the local and regional levels.

According to CSE researchers, Bengaluru's clean air action plan must include ozone mitigation. This requires scaling up zero-emission vehicles, cleaner industrial processes, and fuels. Authorities must also control waste burning, remediate legacy waste, and promote clean household fuels to reduce emissions and tackle rising ground-level ozone levels effectively.

India scenario

As per the analysis, every leading metropolis and megacity in India – including Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Chennai – has been struck by high ozone levels in the summer of 2025. Ground-level ozone pollution in all these cities has spiked, and concentrations have exceeded the eight-hour standards on a number of days.

GST penalty notices may hit our daily bread

Shop owners to halt sales on July 23–24, followed by statewide protest on July 25 at Freedom Park over unjust GST notices

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Around 65,000 bakeries, condiment, and paan beeda shops will stop selling milk and tobacco products on July 23 and 24 across the state in protest against GST notices demanding them to pay lakhs of rupees. "The government has issued GST notices demanding lakhs of rupees from small traders, bakery, condiment, and paan beeda shop owners. We have decided to protest this action," said Karnataka State Karmika Parishat president Dr Ravi Shetty Byndoor. "All shop owners will stop selling milk and tobacco products on July 23 and 24. A massive protest will be held at Freedom Park on July 25, and all bakeries, condiment stores, and paan beeda shops will remain shut for the day," he added.

He said several associations of street vendors and small traders have extended support to the agitation against the government's GST notices.

Particulars	Turn over	CGST	SGST	Total
Merchant transaction amount in INR PHONE PE	0	0	0	0
Merchant transaction amount in INR PAYTM	4029436	362649	362649	725298
INTREST AMOUNT		261108	261108	522216
TOTAL		623757	623757	1247514

ABSTRACT

YEAR	CGST	SGST	Total
2021-22	143175	143175	286350
2022-23	547041	547041	1094082
2023-24	668509	668509	1337018
2024-25	623757	623757	1247514
TOTAL	1982482	1982482	3964964

Above: Bakery and condiment shop owners gathered at a hotel in Bengaluru; Below: A notice demanding to pay Rs 39 lakh towards GST

"We've been running our bakery and condiment shop for two generations. The shop is worth no more than ₹10 lakh, yet we've been asked to pay lakhs in GST. This is unjust," he said. "We will continue our agitation until the government withdraws these notices and delivers justice to small traders and business owners."

Extending support to the agitation, Drivers' Association president Gandasi Sadananda Swamy appealed to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who also chairs the GST Council, to intervene in favour of small traders and businessmen. "Nirmala Sitharaman represents Karnataka, and I urge her to stand with the state's small traders. While the GST issue affects the entire country, its impact on Karnataka is severe. If the government fails to act and protect their interests, we will be forced to intensify our agitation," said Gandasi Sadananda Swamy.

Meanwhile, Sudhakar Shetty, who owns a bakery and condiment shop at Yelahanka, said that he received a notice to pay Rs 39 lakh towards the GST for the years 2021-22, 2022-023, and 2023-24. "It is quite shocking to receive the notice demanding to pay lakhs of rupees towards the GST. My wife and I maintain the shop. Its total value is only a few lakhs. I am of the opinion that I have to explain to the authorities concerned," said Sudhakar Shetty. Echoing similar concerns, Shreyas Kota Poojary said his brother, who runs a bakery and condiment shop in Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru, received a GST notice demanding ₹33 lakh. "The shop isn't worth more than ₹3 lakh. How can he be expected to pay such a massive amount in GST?" he questioned, calling the notice unjust and unreasonable.

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Route discontinued

Guttahalli

Residents of Palace Guttahalli and nearby areas are stranded after BMTC abruptly discontinued a crucial bus route connecting Yeshwanthpur to Domlur. The route served key hubs, and with no direct alternative, daily commuters face major inconvenience. BMTC remains silent.

Broken trolley

Kumara Park West

At Kumara Park West, pourakarmikas are forced to carry garbage on plastic mats as the trolley's broken wheel remains unrepaired. The contractor has failed to fix or replace it.

Vehicle menace

Hospital Road

An abandoned vehicle has been blocking space on the narrow Hospital Road for years, creating constant obstruction and inconvenience for pedestrians and motorists. Authorities have failed to act.

Even doorstep deliveries come with sole price

Footwear thefts are rising across B'luru, with even CCTV-equipped homes unable to deter culprits; citizens report missing shoes

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Some RWAs warn against leaving items outside

Footwear thefts, once considered limited to temple entrances, are now creeping back into residential neighbourhoods, and even tech-savvy, camera-equipped homes are not spared. In a recent incident that has raised eyebrows, CCTV footage from a home captured a man in a delivery uniform stealing a pair of shoes right after delivering the order. The video shows the suspect walking up to a house to drop off an order, then casually turning around and lifting a pair of branded sneakers from a footwear rack outside the door before walking away by keeping them inside the delivery bag, all in a matter of seconds.

This is not a one-off incident. An elderly man was caught on CCTV footage stealing expensive, branded shoes and slippers from an apartment complex in Ayyappanagar, located in the KR Puram area. The incident occurred around 12.30 am, when the man, wearing a monkey cap to partially hide his identity, entered the premises under the cover of darkness. Surveillance footage shows the elderly thief inspecting footwear left outside several flats, carefully selecting only high-end brands before making his exit. Frustrated by the incident, residents have filed a formal complaint with the police.

Back in March, a householder of Jayanagar had lodged a police complaint after losing 20 pairs of slippers that were kept outside his home in a gated community. According to the complainant, on the night of March 2, at around 10.30 pm, everything, including the flowers at his residence, appeared to be in proper condition. However, when he checked the next morning on March 3, at around 7 am, he discovered that 20 pairs of shoes kept outside his house were missing. He suspects that someone had entered the premises during the night and stolen the footwear.

Jayanagar Police officials stated that the suspect, who arrived in an Ola cab before stealing shoes, has been linked to two or three similar cases. "Tracking him was not that challenging. We used technical evidence, including Ola's map data, and we were able to trace and catch him," they added.

"Earlier, people were afraid to leave slippers outside temples due to theft. Now, even if you keep them outside your own house, they are not safe. It's surprising the involvement of gig economy workers in the CCTV footage, who are generally trusted with direct access to people's doorsteps," said a resident of Jayanagar.

While some cases are brushed off as petty theft, the frequency and brazenness of such acts are making residents question how safe their neighbourhoods are. In some areas, residents' welfare associations have now begun warning members against leaving shoes or any valuables outside the door.

"While some may genuinely forget their footwear or mistakenly take someone else's, the deliberate theft of shoes for financial gain is a real concern in Bengaluru. A single pair can be worth over ₹10,000, but when resold at a lower price, the thief faces no real loss, making it an easy way to earn quick money. These stolen shoes are typically resold at Sunday markets or passed on to contacts in other cities for profit," said a police official.

Last year, around the same time, Bengaluru police arrested Gangadhar and Yellappa for stealing over 10,000 pairs of branded shoes over seven years. The duo targeted apartments and temples at night using an auto-rickshaw, later selling the stolen shoes at Sunday bazaars and tourist spots like Ooty and Pondicherry. A recent theft in BEL Layout led to their arrest after CCTV footage revealed their auto. Police recovered 715 pairs of shoes worth ₹10 lakh and two gas cylinders.

Citizens contest Greater B'luru Act

In response to the state government's initiative to divide BBMP into multiple corporations, Citizens' Action Forum (CAF), comprising citizens and civil society leaders, has lodged a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Karnataka High Court. The petition seeks to halt various sections of the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act 2024, contending that they are unconstitutional, arbitrary, and unreasonable.

The legal challenge targets the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), questioning its structure, authority, and responsibilities, including urban development planning, infrastructure projects, and local body coordination. The GBA's powers encompass issuing directives, land acquisition, fund management, and delegating authority to municipal corporations, which oversee public markets, tax collection, and ward committee establishment.

The petition specifically contests sections 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 85, 95, 96, 100(2)(iv), 101, 103(4), 129(2), 130, 137(2), 145, and 249 of the Act, which the state government notified on April 24.

The legal action challenges provisions regarding the GBA's financial powers, including borrowing capabilities, budget preparation, and audit procedures, alongside the state government's regulatory authority and the supersession of existing legislation like the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1976.

The petitioners have requested a writ of certiorari or a suitable alternative to invalidate these sections, whilst also seeking an interim stay until the case concludes, citing immediate concerns requiring temporary relief.

The matter awaits listing for initial hearing before the High Court's Division Bench.

On Tuesday, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar announced that the new Greater Bengaluru Authority would oversee five city corporations.

BBMP Covid scam probe

Based on the interim report submitted by Justice Michael D Cunha, the Karnataka government has ordered a departmental inquiry against nine BBMP officials in connection with financial irregularities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Cunha Committee, constituted to investigate Covid-era corruption worth crores, had earlier issued notices to 28 officials from BBMP's central office, seeking their explanations. Following their responses, 19 officials have been cleared of all charges, while nine, including senior officers from the health and accounts departments, now face an internal probe. Additionally, notices have been issued to several agencies to recover ₹13 crore, based on the committee's findings, for supplying medical equipment and materials to BBMP during the pandemic. **–BMB**

CM inaugurates prison staff quarters

The 128 newly constructed staff quarters at the Bangalore Central Prison premises laid the foundation stone for a new annexe building at the Prison Headquarters was inaugurated by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday at 4.30 pm. These significant developments are part of ongoing reforms to enhance infrastructure and administrative capabilities within the state's prison system.

As part of the first phase of the Police Housing 2025 project, the 128 residential quarters for prison staff were built by the Karnataka State Police Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (KSPH & IDCL) at a cost of ₹40 crore. The housing complex aims to provide better living conditions for prison personnel and their families.

Additionally, the Chief Minister initiated the construction of an annexe building within the Karnataka Prisons and Correctional Services Department Headquarters at Seshadri Road. The facility will house the Prisons Development Board, Prisoners' Welfare and Industries divisions, DIG Zonal Offices, and a Command Centre. The project, funded with a ₹5.08 crore grant for FY 2024-25, is being executed by KSPH & IDCL.

In another move, the government announced progress on the Karnataka Academy of Prisons and Correctional Services in Gandhinagar. The ₹24.16 crore project, spread across 2768 sqm. **BMB**

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B'luru rises in student rankings

In the QS Best Student Cities 2026 rankings released on Tuesday by UK-based Quacquarelli Symonds, Bengaluru has secured the 108th spot out of 130 cities worldwide. The city was also recognised among the top performers for affordability, making it a preferred destination for students seeking quality education at a reasonable cost. India marked notable progress with four metropolitan cities—Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai—earning spots on the global list. Delhi rises to 104th, most affordable for students. **–BMB**

Coconut prices soar despite rains

Tender coconut prices in Bengaluru have surged to an all-time high of ₹70–₹80, surprising consumers even during the typically stable monsoon season. This spike is largely due to a significant decline in coconut yields over the past two years. The shortage has also driven up prices of coconuts and dry copra. Major producing states—Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka—have reported sharp drops in output this season. Neglected trees blamed for coconut prices. **–BMB**

Hebbal–Silk board mega tunnel tender

Despite criticism from various stakeholders, Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (BSIL) has floated global tenders for the ambitious three-lane twin-tunnel road project between Hebbal and Silk Board. Approved by the Cabinet, the 16.74-km underground stretch is expected to ease traffic congestion and will be executed in two phases. The first package spans 8.74 km from Esteem Mall, Hebbal, to Race Course Junction on Sheshadri Road, estimated at ₹8,770 crore. The second, costing ₹8,928 crore, will connect Racecourse Junction to Silk Board over 7.99 km. **–BMB**

ICMR Honour

Dr Shrinivasa B M, medical scientist at ICMR-NIMR, Bengaluru, has been conferred the "Exceptional and Meritorious Scientist" award by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). A student of the 9th batch of JNV Mandya and an MBBS graduate from VIMS, Bellary, Dr Shrinivasa has been recognised for his significant contributions to medical research. **–BMB**

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Farmers' 3-year resistance halts mega defence project, igniting inter-state race and reshaping India's land acquisition politics

Devanahalli protest forces Karnataka U-turn, spurs Andhra investment push

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Karnataka's dramatic U-turn on the Devanahalli Aerospace and Defence Park project—following an unprecedented 1,198-day farmers' protest has triggered a two-pronged challenge for the state. On one front, neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has swiftly stepped in to woo potential investors, seizing on Karnataka's retreat. On the other, the protest has set a powerful precedent that may reshape land acquisition dynamics across the state and potentially the country.

Soon after Karnataka scrapped plans to acquire 1,777 acres of fertile farmland in Channarayapatna Hobli, Bengaluru Rural district, Andhra Pradesh moved quickly to position itself as an attractive alternative. State IT Minister Nara Lokesh, son of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, extended an open invitation to aerospace and defence firms to consider Andhra instead. Citing its proximity to Bengaluru and over 8,000 acres of ready-to-use land, Lokesh promised better infrastructure, policy incentives, and smoother execution.

"We were disheartened to hear about Karnataka's project cancellation," Lokesh said. "But why not look at Andhra Pradesh? We offer world-class infrastructure, incentives, and strategically located land just outside Bengaluru."

Farmers raise green scarves high after 1,198 days of protest, peacefully celebrating rollback of land acquisition

> **"We were disheartened to hear about Karnataka's project cancellation, but why not look at Andhra Pradesh?**
>
> –Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh

The pitch underscores a broader trend of rising inter-state competition for industrial investment, especially in high-value sectors like aerospace and defence. Karnataka's delays and eventual withdrawal—prompted by sustained farmer resistance—are now being framed by Andhra as a sign of uncertainty and missed opportunity.

In response, Karnataka's Minister for Large and Medium Industries, MB Patil, sought to reassure stakeholders. "Karnataka has sufficient land for all sectors—from aerospace and defence to AI and deep tech. Not a single investor will leave due to land issues," Patil said on Wednesday. "We remain committed to attracting and retaining investment."

Yet, beyond state rivalry lies a more complex and significant development. The Devanahalli protest has brought into sharp focus the socio-political cost of land acquisition in modern India. What began as a 2021 notification by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) turned into one of the longest-running land rights protests in the state's recent history.

Led by the Channarayapatna Bhooswadeena Horata Samiti, representing farmers from 13 villages, the movement featured tractor rallies, torchlight processions, and 'Devanahalli Chalo' marches. Protesters camped outside Vidhana Soudha and repeatedly raised slogans like "Our land, our right" and "We'll give our lives, not our land," galvanising public opinion and media attention.

The eventual rollback of the project marked a rare victory for agrarian communities, one that analysts believe could influence future protests and land policy decisions. "Devanahalli is no longer just about one project—it's a symbolic win," said a senior policy analyst. "It shows that sustained, grassroots mobilisation can override even high-priority industrial plans."

Karnataka now faces a delicate balancing act retaining investor interest while addressing rural concerns over displacement and livelihoods. The fear of industries shifting to more proactive states like Andhra Pradesh is real, but so is the increasing resistance from communities unwilling to sacrifice their land without due process and guarantees.

As India continues to pursue rapid industrialisation, Devanahalli may well become a defining example of how the country negotiates the delicate triad of land, industry, and people.

Role reversal of sorts?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Using sophisticated tactics and emotional manipulation, the accused gained the victim's trust before orchestrating the fraud, underscoring the calculated approach now being adopted in such schemes.

In another case, a woman named Savitha (49) hosted a kitty party that was meant to be a casual tea gathering, but it turned into a scam where she cheated around 30 women out of nearly ₹30 crore. According to police officials, Savitha and her accomplice were arrested in July 2025 for defrauding women through fake kitty parties, gold import schemes, and high-return investments. Police officials said Savitha gained trust by pretending to be a social worker, realtor, and gold trader with strong political connections and financial backgrounds, luring victims via social media with promises of doubling their money.

In another case, a Kerala-based couple, Tomy A Varghese (57) and Shiny Tomy (52), who ran A&A Chit Funds in Bengaluru's Ramamurthy Nagar, allegedly fled to Kenya after duping many investors. The case which initially started with 60 complaints has now grown to 408, with the amount defrauded already exceeding Rs 48 crore. The duo, well-trusted in the Malayali community for over two decades, sold their house and vehicles before disappearing. Karnataka and Kerala Police have launched a global manhunt, and the case is now under CID investigation. Officials fear the scam may exceed ₹100 crore as more victims come forward.

Although women still make up a smaller number of those arrested for financial crimes, their involvement is becoming more noticeable, especially in cases that involve large amounts of money and complex planning.

Police officials explain it's too early to call this a clear trend, as many of these cases are still under investigation. They believe more research is needed to understand the reasons and situations that lead women to take part in white-collar crimes. While it's not yet possible to draw firm conclusions, the recent cases do show that women are increasingly being seen in the spotlight of such financial frauds.

In the case of Aishwarya Gowda, her arrest in connection with an interstate gold smuggling racket further highlights how women are no longer peripheral figures but key players in organised financial crimes. Investigations revealed her active role in coordinating with carriers and concealing the smuggled gold. Last year an FIR was registered at Chandralayout police station. In a jewellery fraud case involving Varahi World of Gold in Bengaluru, Vanitha S Aithal filed a complaint against Aishwarya Gowda and her husband Harish K N, and also actor Dharmendra B claiming they cheated her of ₹8.41 crore.

With recent update on case, The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Bengaluru Zonal Office, has provisionally attached assets worth ₹3.98 crore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in a case involving Aishwarya Gowda, her husband Harish KN, and others. The seized assets include flats, land, buildings worth ₹2.01 crore, and movable assets like cash and a vehicle worth ₹1.97 crore. The investigation was launched after several FIRs in Karnataka alleged that the accused collected gold, cash, and bank transfers from victims by promising high returns. However, the funds were never returned. The ED also found documents and digital evidence during multiple raids. The Aishwarya Gowda case reached a point where even Deputy CM Shivakumar's brother, DK Suresh, faced ED questioning twice. This shows that even politically influential families were not spared.

PSI penalised in ganja frame-up

Police Sub-Inspector Raghavendra, currently posted at SJ Park Police Station, has been penalised for falsely implicating a 44-year-old man in a major narcotics case under the NDPS Act.

The case, registered in 2023 at the DJ Halli Police Station, involved the seizure of 80 kg of Ganja. Murali, a resident of Chikkabanasawadi, was named as the third accused based solely on the statement of another accused. No further verification or investigation was conducted to establish Murali's involvement.

Murali later approached senior officers, asserting he had no link to the case. A departmental inquiry led by Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) confirmed serious lapses in the investigation, with officials concluding that PSI Raghavendra had acted negligently. **BMB**

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Not many takers to bid for Mahatma Gandhi Park upkeep work

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A walk on MG Road from Trinity Junction to Kasturba Road Junction to locate Mahatma Gandhi Plaza proved futile.

When contacted, BBMP Executive Engineer (QA&QC), East Zone, said that the tender notice is for providing PMC services including supervision, quality control for upgradation and redevelopment of Mahatma Gandhi Plaza at MG Road. When asked about the location of the Mahatma Gandhi Plaza, the executive engineer said the tender is intended for the development and upgradation of Mahatma Gandhi Park. The total cost of the development and upgradation of the park is estimated at Rs 4 crore.

Bangalore Mirror published a story - 2 days of respect, rest wears out in neglect - on June 27, 2024, about how the BBMP Horticulture Department has neglected the Mahatma Gandhi Park and then again on July 8 the same year, we reported about how the BBMP Horticulture Department swiftly responded to repair and restore the broken and rusted charaka of Mahatma Gandhi at the park.

Since then, it took almost one year for the BBMP to float a tender inviting bidders for the development and upgradation of Mahatma Gandhi Park. According to sources, the tender was floated for the third time as there was no response from the qualified bidders for the tender floated recently.

Meanwhile, social activists and pedestrians have expressed concern over the negligence of the BBMP authorities. Stating that this is not just a plaza but it is a memorial dedicated to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and it must be treated with the dignity, respect, and honor it deserves, Vinod Jacob of Namma Bengaluru Foundation said that unfortunately, the memorial fountains lie defunct, and the park itself is in a state of neglect. Both BBMP and the Horticulture Department continue to shift responsibility, with no clear accountability for its upkeep.

"Situated in the heart of Bengaluru, this space should stand as a symbol of our gratitude to Mahatma Gandhi and the countless freedom fighters who gave their lives for our country. The proposed renovation costs appear inflated, and instead of a cosmetic overhaul, we urge a thoughtful, respectful restoration. We suggest creating a shaded two-wheeler cycle parking behind the memorial, asphalting the adjacent road to make it more pedestrian-friendly, and regulating car parking to one side only. Let's not forget this is a memorial, not a commercial zone," he said.

Brigade Road Shops Owners' Association president Bramhananda Reddy said the BBMP must ensure proper maintenance of the park and not waste tax-payers' money. "The BBMP should spend money to restore defunct fountains, lights, and provide basic amenities for the benefit of people who visit the park," he said.

BBMP Executive Engineer (QA&QC), East Zone, said the tender was floated inviting bidders for the development and upgradation of Mahatma Gandhi Park. "Till now, no bidder has evinced interest. BBMP Shantinagar Division will select a qualified contractor for the upgradation of the park," he said.

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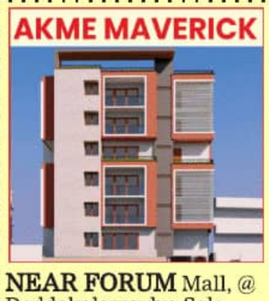

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kubra Bi Mohamed Haneef W/o Mohammed Haneef R/o #69,G Floor,1st Cross, Anepalya, Neelasandra B'lore-560047 have changed my name to Kubra Bi.

I, Deepalakshmi R/o Flat.501, Loggia Stallion, 1438, 13th cross, Ananthnagar Ph-2, Kammasandra, Anekal B'luru 560100 have changed my name to Deepalakshmi Balakrishnan. I shall called by this name for all purpose

I, Gopinath R/o Flat.501, Loggia Stallion, 1438, 13th cross, Ananthnagar ph-2, Kammsandra, Anekal B'luru 560100 have changed my name to Gopinath Rajasekaran. I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I SATHYANARAYANA BARATHANARAYANA S/o, Jayanarayana, Residing at, Medahalli village, Bidrahalli, Virgonagar Post, Bengaluru 560049, have changed my name to SATHYANARAYANA for all purposes.

I Mohammed Owais Ghulam S/O, Mohammed Ghulam R/o No 18 4th Cross Bheemanna Layout Kavalbyrasandra Bangalore Karnataka - 560032 have changed my name to Mohammed Owais Ghulam Khatha.

I, Deepthi K N w/o Madhu K V R/o 12, 3rd cross, Navodaya Nagar, JP Nagar, 7th phase, Bengaluru 560078 have changed my name to Deepthi Medappa k Affidavit Dt.16/07/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Tony Marsilin Panakal William s/o William Panakal r/o 655, 5th Cross, 11th main, 4th Block Koramangala, Bangalore 560034, have changed my name to TONY MARSILIN For all purposes.

I Jayasree K D/O, Kothandan R/o 24/1, 7th Cross, 16th Main,near Nalanda School, Jc Nagar, Kurubrahalli, Mahalakshmi Puram, Bangalore - 560086 have changed my name to Jayashree K.

I Shameem Bano W/O, Irshad Peeran R/o No 36/1 Ground Floor 13th Cross Rashad Nagar Govindapura Arabic College Bangalore Karnataka - 560045 have changed my name to Shameem Banu.

I, Sasikala R/o No.7, 1st B cross, Choluru Palya, Magadi road, Bengaluru 560023 have changed my name to Sasikala Saravanan.I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Mushtak Begum R/o No 24, 5th Cross Rt Nagar Bangalore 560032 Have Changed My Name From Mushtak Begum to Mushthak Begum For all Purposes.

I, Kishlay Sharad R/o 9282, Prestige Lakeside Habitat, Gunjur, Bangalore 560087 have changed my minor daughter's name from Kimaayra R Sharad to Irra Sharrad for all purposes

I SHAIK JUNAID AHAMED S/o RIZWAN AHAMED R/o No 76 5th Cross New Guddadahalli Bangalore 560026 have changed my name to SHAIK JUNAID AHMED for all Purposes

I, Sugirtha Chidambaram W/o Rajan Thangapalam R/o Aquila Heights Polaris 8B HMT Main Rd Jalahalli B'lore-560013 have changed my name to Sugirtha Rajan.

I, GULZAR HAROON PASHA, R/a.# No 136 Adigarakallahalli Village Madarasa Bidaraguppe village Dommasandra-56212, I, have Changed my name to GULZAR BEGUM, Vide affidavit, dated 15/07/2025 Sworn before Notary: Meer Hussain. Bangalore

LOST & FOUND

LOST: P Sabarimalai, have lost my original sale deed documents situated in Mudhugana palli village of Hosur taluk, Krishnagiri district documents number 5766/2012 Sy.no. 725/2 in which Plot no 77A eastern portion Sro Kelamangalam village while some personal work in Bangalore Hebbal Guddadahalli, 11th cross, Kem panna layout, Case registered in Hebbal police station, Case number 1587763/2025. Finder please contact or return to this address No.825, Sanarimalai P, Guddadahalli, 11th Cross, Kem panna layout, Hebbal, Banga lore-560032. Contact: 9845419904.

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Dead tigers, dodgy report?

In letter, environmentalist questions credibility of panel probing five tiger deaths in MM Hills

INFOCUS POWER PLAY

In an open letter, Environmentalist Akhilesh Chipli has questioned the appointment of members in the high-level committee that was constituted to conduct a thorough probe into the death of five tigers in Male Mahadeshwara Hills Wildlife Sanctuary (MM Hills WLS) on June 26.

Chipli, along with some other wildlife enthusiasts and conservationists, is now demanding that the case be handed over to the CBI for inquiry.

"The appointment of individuals with no expertise to this committee, along with the removal of an honest officer from the committee, has raised several doubts and suspicions. Justice cannot be served for the dead tigers and wild animals based on an incomplete and half-cooked report filled with sensationalism," Chipli has said.

After five tigers were found dead in the Hoogyam Range of Male Mahadeshwara Hills Wildlife Sanctuary (MM Hills WLS), a high-level inquiry Committee was established under the orders of the Chief Wildlife Warden, Karnataka, which submitted its preliminary report on the incident recently.

Chipli alleged that the report prepared by the committee is misleading and has been prepared to muddy the investigation.

Those questioning the high-level committee reports say justice cannot be achieved for the dead tigers and wild animals based on an incomplete and half-truth report filled with sensationalism.

"It is important to note that a retired IFS officer is a director in a certain NGO of a scientist. He criticised the forest department's actions and the government in the media regarding this tiger tragedy. A popular scientist from the same organisation has been involved in casting aspersions on the high-level inquiry committee for this tiger tragedy. Their organisation is flaunting power by building a house and office in the elephant corridor of Bandipur forest, which has been opposed by the locals," alleged Chipli in his letter.

Wildlife enthusiasts demand CBI inquiry

Conservationists say that generally, mother tigers do not kill one prey. Going by this logic, numerous cattle should have been killed in the area. However, no farmer had ever been reported to poison a tiger.

"It is impossible to dismiss the fact that the tiger was poisoned with the involvement of poachers and traffickers. Nevertheless, due to an unholy alliance between publicity-seeking scientists and high-ranking officials of the forest department, the truth is unlikely to emerge," said a wildlife conservationist. **BMB**

HC upholds POCSO conviction

The Karnataka High Court has affirmed a trial court's verdict, which sentenced a 27-year-old man to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment for violations under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code and Sections 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act.

IN HIGH COURT

Justice JM Khazi, presiding as a single judge, rejected the appeal by Ansair Khasim Jingru against the trial court's conviction order dated November 24, 2022.

The court stated: "The examination of oral and documentary evidence placed on record by the prosecution establishes the allegations made against the accused. The trial Court, on detailed and thorough analysis of the evidence led by the prosecution, has come to the correct conclusion that the accused has committed the offences alleged and convicted and sentenced him. The conclusions arrived at by the trial Court are consistent with the evidence on record, and this Court finds no perversity calling for interference."

According to prosecution records, on March 15, 2022, at 2.00 pm, the accused enticed a six-year-old boy who was playing near Abdul Karim Alji's shop in Kagal Hini village. He offered the child a motorcycle ride and took him to the Aghanashini River, approximately one and a half kilometres away, where he committed the offence.

The appellant contested that the trial court had incorrectly assessed the evidence. The prosecution's case relied primarily on circumstantial evidence, except for the six-year-old victim's statement, recorded a week after the incident.

The defence argued that the medical evidence was inconclusive and highlighted the delayed complaint filing. The prosecution countered that the accused was unknown to the victim's family, eliminating any motive for false accusations.

Initially, the victim only mentioned the motorcycle ride without disclosing further details. The nature of the offence became apparent only after medical examination, explaining the delayed complaint filing.

The court, after reviewing witness testimonies and age-verification documents, confirmed the victim's age as six years, validating the POCSO Act.

Addressing the delayed complaint, the court noted: "It is pertinent to note that it was a shocking and humiliating experience for the victim boy to have undergone the unnatural sexual assault by the accused. For this reason, he was not ready to disclose what transpired. Only after the treatment and passage of time, he has opened and revealed the fact of a sexual assault on him."

The court further stated: "For this reason only, in the complaint, the maternal uncle of the victim boy has stated that the victim boy did not disclose the details. Only after a medical examination, they came to know that it is a sexual assault, and accordingly, after his treatment, they have filed the complaint."

The court upheld the sentence based on Section 42 of the POCSO Act. **BMB**

INBRIEF

Extortion pushes man to suicide

A KEB employee from Bengaluru died by suicide after allegedly being harassed and extorted by a cyber-criminal posing as a CBI officer. The MK Doddi police under Channapattana Rural Circle have registered a case of abetment to suicide in connection with the incident.

The deceased, Kumar K, had been working with the electricity department and living with his wife and 8-year-old son in BTM Layout for the past 25 years. According to his wife, Savithramma, Kumar had been under visible mental distress for the last two weeks, receiving constant phone calls that left him anxious and disturbed.

He reportedly left for his hometown, citing personal work, where he ended his life on Tuesday.

Accused MLA denies role

A day after rowdy-sheeter Shivakumar alias Biklu Shivu was hacked to death near his residence in Halasuru, BJP MLA Byrathi Basavaraj has strongly denied any involvement in the crime and questioned the police's decision to register an FIR against him without prior inquiry.

On Wednesday, Basavaraj said, "Did the police take any statement from me before naming me in the FIR? I have no connection with this murder. Anyone can file a complaint, but how can an FIR be registered without verification?" He alleged the case could be politically motivated and added, "I will face this legally. I didn't even know the deceased."

The MLA from Krishnarajapuram has been named in the FIR following a complaint by the victim's mother, Vijayalakshmi, who accused him of abetting the murder.

NCB busts drug syndicate

Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Bengaluru has busted two African drug syndicates operating out of Delhi and Mumbai, resulting in the seizure of 9 kg of high-grade Methamphetamine and the arrest of three foreign nationals.

Based on intelligence inputs, NCB intercepted the suspects at the Bangalore Bus Stand and Kempegowda International Airport in two separate operations conducted over three days.

In the first operation, a female African national carrying 7 kg of Methamphetamine from Delhi via Mumbai was apprehended. To avoid suspicion, she was travelling with a child. A second female, believed to have orchestrated the smuggling, was arrested shortly after. In the second operation, officials seized 2 kg of Methamphetamine from an African national at the airport. The drugs were concealed in luggage and had been sourced and packed in West Delhi. **BMB**

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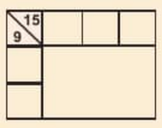
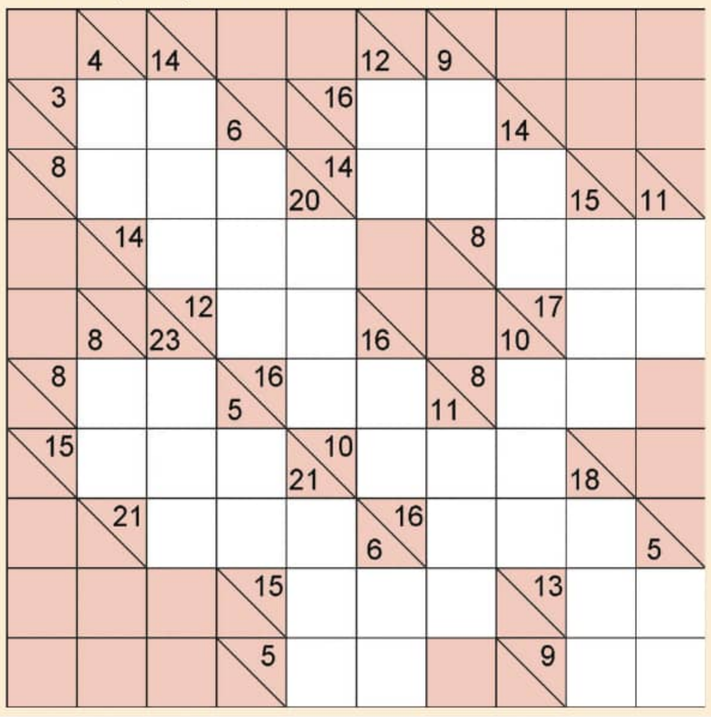
Kakuro

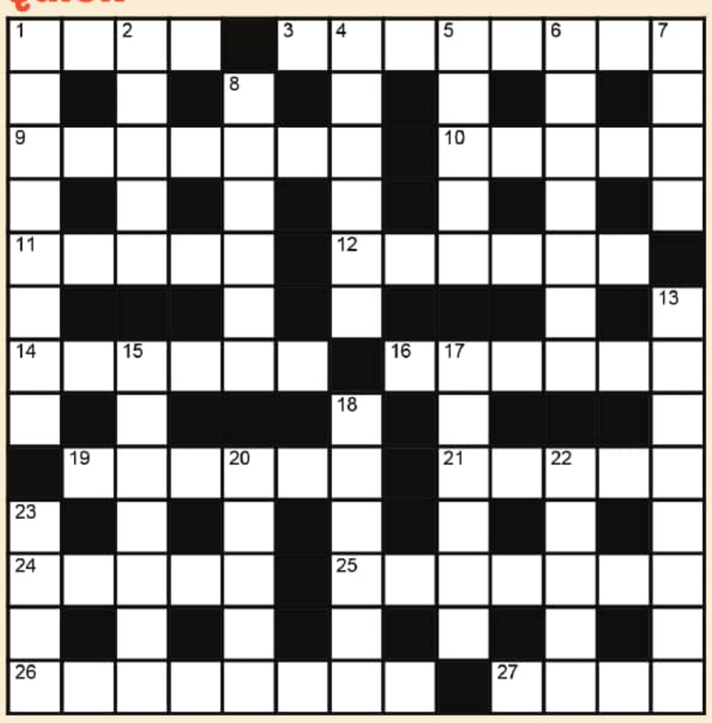
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Leaning Tower's city (4)
3 Situation lacking definition (4,4)
9 Exaggerate in one's speech or action? (3,2,2)
10 Greek letter (5)
11 Big (5)
12 Like mosaic tiles (6)
14 Restitution (6)
16 Cheese dish of Swiss origin (6)
19 Wodehouse's first name (6)
21 Madagascan primate (5)
24 Attacked or engaged in a fight (3,2)
25 ___ __ his advice : did as he counselled? (5,2)
26 Jewish skullcap (8)
27 Stereo components (4)

DOWN

1 ___ ___ cups: What Donne Biryani is served in (4,4)
2 More cunning (5)
4 Mr Kapoor who was seen in Barfi (6)
5 Bumpkin (5)
6 Answered or responded (7)
7 Middle-Easterner (4)
8 Pay heed (6)
13 Red ___: Clues with an intent to mislead (8)
15 Expelling device? (7)
17 Young birds of prey (6)
18 Go on board (6)
20 Follower of major Indian religion (5)
22 Computer communications device (5)
23 English exclamation (1,3)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: L EQUALS T

LQJ JWJBVJU RA AEJJSRB SR WRL MEHGJ; LQJO UQRGL MWS LQJO UQRRL.

Linemaro

Are you here alone, or will someone have to retain your affections over my dead body?

Mindchow

Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either

Joke of the day

A psychiatrist is a fellow who asks you a lot of expensive questions your wife asks for nothing

Loop

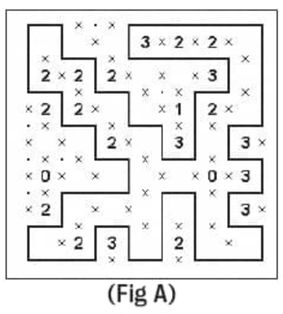
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

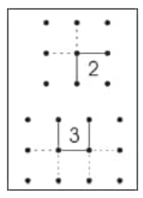
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

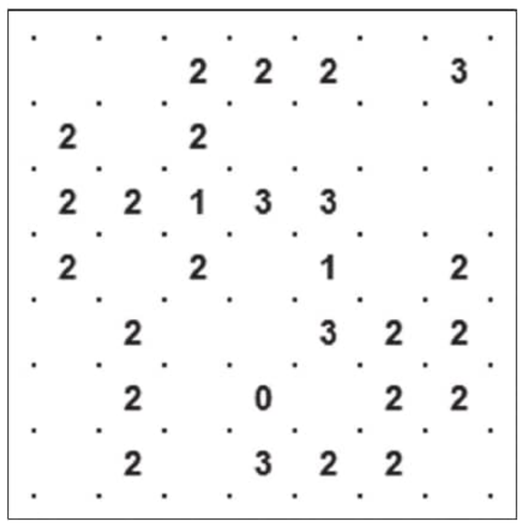
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



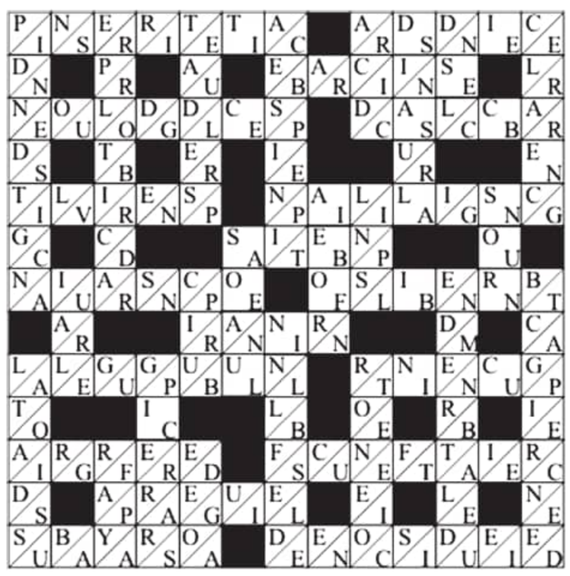
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



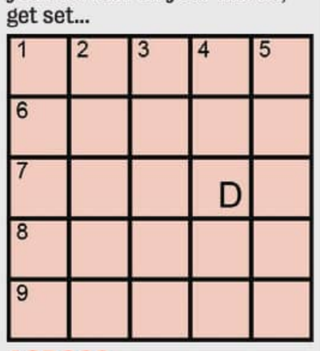
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Papal; 6 Serve; 7 Ideas; 8 Cost I; 9 Hot RC

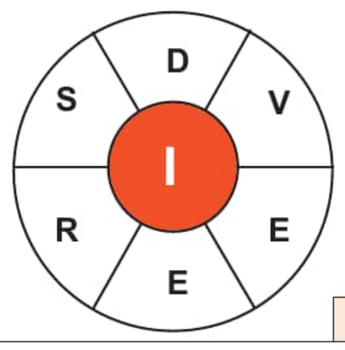
DOWN

1 At vas; 2 Poets; 3 Or rip; 4 Sic ad; 5 Cheel

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

15 Average; 17 Good; 19 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	2						1	
3	5				9	8		2
9			5				3	
5			6	3				
	4						2	
				7	4			1
	8				2			7
1		7	9				4	8
	3						5	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 26

4 6 7 9

Medium = 14

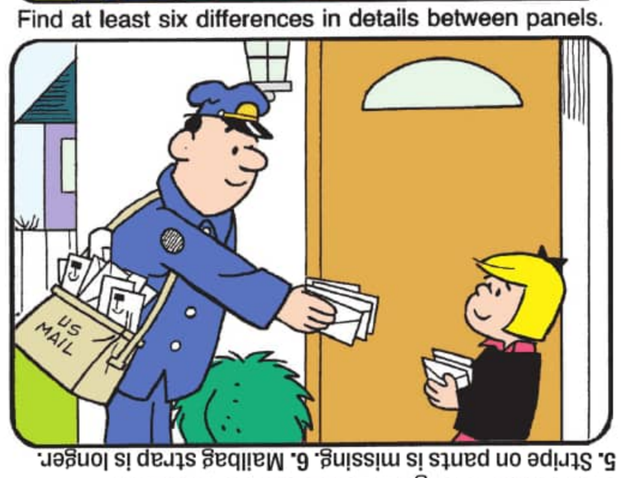
3 7 9 9

Hard = 10

2 3 5 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



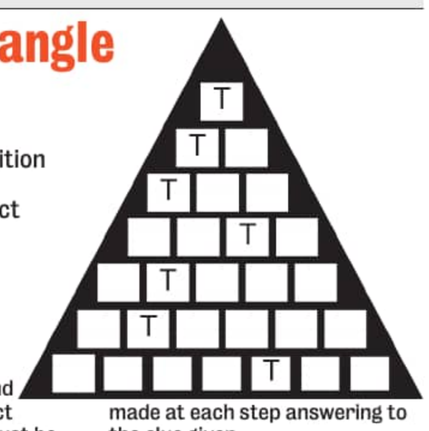
Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Door is wider. 3. Girl's hair is longer. 4. Girl's shirt is different. 5. Stripe on pants is missing. 6. Mailbag strap is longer.

Riddler

Upon one's entry I make one feel invited Though my greeting goes unrequited By all of your guests, I'm looked down upon Receiving no attention as their visit goes on Stomped upon as they exit, I'm not dejected In fact, I remain totally unaffected With my positive message seven-letter One might think I would be treated better What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Terabyte
2 Infinitive word
3 Foot division
4 Unthinking repetition
5 Shopping place
6 Discotheque effect
7 Seafood fare



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

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Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

SO YOU SAY THAT IF I DRIVE IN THE SCHOOL BUS RODEO... WE WON'T HAVE TO FORFEIT ANY POINTS?
EXACTLY!
SO WE COULD STILL WIN THE CHAMPIONSHIP?
LET'S NOT TALK CRAZY...
4-10
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Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today brings joy and satisfaction. Past losses may turn into profits. Seniors at work will appreciate your performance, and there may be changes in your role, position, or responsibilities—possibly indicating a promotion. Hidden enemies and rivals are likely to be subdued. Singles and couples may take important steps toward marriage, with support from family or friends.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Blessed by the Moon, you're in a cheerful mood today. Challenges from the past week are now behind you. Your dedication starts yielding results. With support from subordinates, you'll be able to resume delayed projects. Financial gains in business are likely, improving your overall financial stability.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today may feel sluggish, and health issues could arise. It's best to postpone any major financial investments or business expansions. Avoid starting new ventures, as potential losses may outweigh gains. Focus on rest and recovery before making important decisions.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
The Moon's blessings bring clarity and quick decision-making on the professional front. New opportunities may arise in business, boosting your confidence. With the support of your partner, you might launch a new project or innovation that shows promising future potential.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
You're likely to perform well at work today, and may receive a promotion, transfer, or recognition for your efforts. A job change may also be on your mind. Relationships with superiors will improve. Chronic health issues may finally ease, bringing happiness to your family.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
The Moon blesses you with confidence and decisiveness. You're able to make key decisions without hesitation and may spend quality time with family and friends. Love birds will share joyful moments, and job seekers might find new opportunities with the help of connections.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You may feel low today and struggle to find enjoyment. Arrogance or frustration could impact both your work and personal life. A lack of self-confidence might hinder your creativity. Focus on grounding yourself and avoid reacting emotionally.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Control over blunt communication is important today. Harsh words may hurt those around you. Avoid impulsive spending on unnecessary items. Your mind may be racing—slow down and make decisions calmly. Patience will help prevent regrets.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today is favorable for making quick and impactful decisions. With support from colleagues, you can tackle challenges with ease. Disputes related to property or family may get resolved. You might also take a short, productive trip.

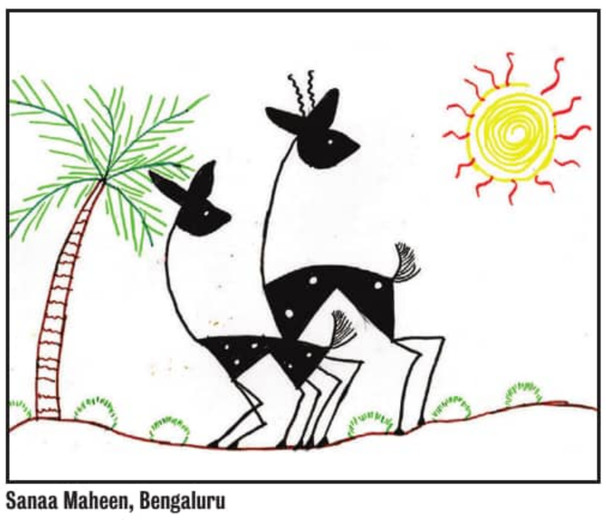
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You're advised to watch your words carefully today. Direct or blunt communication could cause friction. Avoid impulsive spending on trivial things. Your thoughts may be scattered—take your time with decisions and maintain calmness for better outcomes.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Aquarius:
You may feel unwell or emotionally unsettled today. Old health issues might resurface, making you feel drained. Avoid making hasty decisions and be cautious with spending—impulsive purchases may affect your savings. Keep your finances and emotions in check.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Peace of mind returns today. You may decide to invest in your business, boosting liquidity and financial health. Romantic moments with your spouse will strengthen emotional bonds. Singles may find a compatible match. Love birds could make marriage plans. Students are likely to receive positive results from past efforts.

KIDZONE

S Tripthi, Bengaluru



Sanaa Maheen, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
9+(1)9 – (36/4) =
9+9-9 =
18-9 = 9

QUOTE UNCODE
The enemies of freedom do not argue; they shoot and they shoot.

STRIKE OUT

I	N	E	R	T	I	A	■	A	S	D	I	C		
S	T	■	E	■	E	■	■	R	■	N	■	■		
N	O	O	D	L	E	S	■	D	A	C	C	A		
N	■	R	■	A	■	B	R	I	N	E	■	L		
I	V	I	E	S	■	N	A	I	■	L	I	N	G	
G	■	C	■	S	T	E	P	■	O	■	■	■	■	
N	U	A	N	C	E	■	O	S	B	E	R	T	■	
L	E	G	P	U	L	L	■	T	I	E	U	P	■	
O	■	I	■	L	■	O	■	R	■	E	■	■	■	
A	G	R	E	E	■	F	U	N	F	A	I	R	■	
D	■	A	R	G	U	E	■	I	■	L	■	E	■	
S	A	Y	S	O	■	D	E	C	I	D	E	D	■	

FAST FIVE

A	P	P	A	L
V	E	R	S	E
A	S	I	D	E
S	T	O	I	C
T	O	R	C	H

BULL'S EYE
derive, desire, devise, dive, dive, diver, DIVERSE, drive, elder, reside, revise, REVISED, ride, rise, side, sieve, sire, sired, vied

QUICK

P	I	S	A	■	G	R	E	Y	A	R	E	A		
A	■	L	■	A	■	O	■	E	■	R	■	■		
L	A	Y	I	T	O	N	■	K	A	P	P	A		
M	■	E	■	T	■	B	■	E	■	L	■	B		
L	A	R	G	E	■	I	N	L	A	I	D	■		
E	■	N	■	R	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	H		
A	M	E	N	D	S	■	F	O	N	D	U	E		
F	■	J	■	E	■	W	■	L	E	M	U	R		
P	E	L	H	A	M	■	■	■	■	■	■	R		
I	■	C	■	B	■	E	■	O	■	I	■	■		
S	E	T	O	N	■	A	C	T	E	D	O	N		
A	■	O	■	D	■	R	■	S	■	E	■	G		
Y	A	R	M	U	L	K	E	■	A	M	P	S		

MENSA PUZZLE
B. Working from top to bottom, replace each letter with its numerical value and read each pair of numbers as a 2 digit number. Numbers follow the sequence of multiples of 9, from 27 to 72.

RIDDLER
A welcome mat

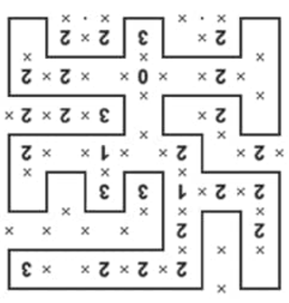
SUDOKU

7	2	4	3	8	6	9	1	5
9	1	8	5	6	3	2	7	4
3	5	6	4	1	9	8	7	2
5	7	2	6	3	1	4	8	9
6	4	1	8	9	5	7	2	3
8	9	3	2	7	4	5	6	1
4	8	5	1	6	2	3	9	7
1	6	7	9	5	3	2	4	8
2	3	9	7	4	8	1	5	6

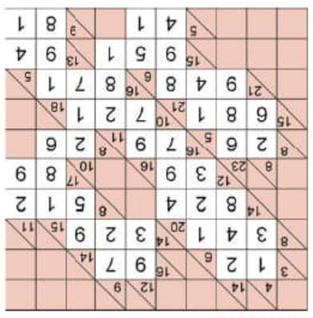
ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, To, Toe, Rote, Store, Strobe, Lobster.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 4 + 9 + 6 = 26
Medium
9 – 7 + 3 + 9 = 14
Hard
3 x 5 / 3 x 2 = 10

LOOP



KAKURO



Volume No 18, Issue No 141 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore – 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru – 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon – responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

 # Homebound in Toronto fest
Director Neeraj Ghaywan's 'Homebound' selected for Toronto International Film Festival

IN FULL SUPPORT

Tamannaah says actors can be supportive of influencer culture

The lines between actors and influencers are increasingly blurring, and during a chat with us recently, Tamannaah Bhatia weighed in on this evolution and how actors are adapting to this new reality.

She said, "I love the fact that I have worked my way to become an actor. It is also important to adapt and change with the times, and along with acting, we actors are learning about live content creation - we've also become influencers."

She further added, "I did not have any background in acting, but with hard work, I made my way to people's hearts. There are many people who don't want to become actors but want to put their voices across and reach out to people. Social media is an important tool in helping build identities and promote brands."

Reflecting on influencers' presence at major events like the Cannes Film Festival, the 'Baahubali' actress said, "I don't feel competitive at all. I'm happy that the process is democratised and that we're giving people a chance to build communities. I feel that glamour, looking good and endorsements should not be limited to actors. We, as actors, should support the influencer culture because it gives people an opportunity to earn a living through their talent, and everyone deserves a chance."

On the film front, Tamannaah continues her action-packed run with 'Odela 2' and 'Raid 2' already behind her, and upcoming titles like 'Ranger' and Rohit Shetty's untitled action drama lined up. In an earlier interview with BT, Tamannaah said, "I'm in a phase where I'm looking inwards for inspiration. I want to express myself in the most honest way possible and stay focused on my work. I am trying to find ways through which I can express myself in the most honest way. I am enjoying this phase."

—Tanvi Trivedi, ETimes

Loving birthday wishes

Making the 42nd birthday of Katrina Kaif's extremely special, her husband and actor Vicky Kaushal dropped a love-filled post on social media.

With his Instagram wish, Vicky made sure to pamper his "birthday girl" in the most adorable way.

He shared a string of images of Katrina, flaunting her romantic and goofy side.

In the first snap, Katrina can be seen making goofy expressions.

The other picture showed Vicky giving a peck on Katrina's cheek as the two snuggled together.

The third picture is quite romantic. Katrina can be seen looking adorably at her husband. And the last is a throwback picture of Katrina at the beach.

Along with this dreamy photo dump, Vicky wished

Katrina by writing, "Hello Birthday Girl! I (red heart emoji) U."

Vicky and Katrina tied the knot on December 9, 2021.

—ANI

Lupita on uterine fibroids diagnosis

Oscar-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o got candid about her health and shared struggles with uterine fibroids, non-cancerous growths that develop in or around the uterus, reported E! News.

"In March 2014, I won an Academy Award. That same year, I discovered that I had uterine fibroids," Lupita wrote in her Instagram post, adding, "30 fibroids. I had surgery to remove them. I asked my doctor if there was anything I could do to prevent them from recurring. She said: 'You can't. It's only a matter of time until they grow again."

The star shared that she did not realise the condition affected so many women until she started discussing her experience "privately" with her inner circle. "When we reach puberty, we're taught periods mean pain, and that pain is simply part of being a woman. We're struggling alone with something that affects us most," she said. She continued, "We must reject the normalisation of female pain."

—ANI

Same, but different

Kajol is gearing up for 'Sarzameen', where she stars alongside Ibrahim Ali Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran. The film brings together fresh and familiar faces, but it also marks the directorial debut of Kayoze Irani, son of the much-loved actor Boman Irani. 'Sarzameen' is set for an OTT release on July 25.

In a recent chat with SCREEN, Kajol shared her experience of working with Ibrahim Ali Khan, especially considering her long association with his father, Saif Ali Khan. Kajol and Saif have delivered several memorable films together, and it was only natural to compare father and son.

Kajol observed, "The camera loves both the father and the son. Ibrahim is so inherently good-looking that he doesn't have to say much, just brood in front of the camera, and he is sorted in life. But he is a quieter personality than Saif. I have known Saif for years now, he is bigger and brighter, persona-wise, and always has been. But Ibrahim is going to do well."

Kayoze Irani said both he and Ibrahim were taking on new challenges. " We gave him six months of prep, and I am extremely happy with how it has turned out."

—ETimes

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

6 movies announced

Recently, Vijay Tata announced the launch of six movies under the Amrita Cine Crafts banner on the occasion of Guru Purnima at Sheraton Grand Hotel.

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao and Minister for Transport and Muzrai Department Ramalinga Reddy and prominent personalities of Sandalwood attended the function.

Both the ministers said the launch would help the Kannada film industry.

Crazy Star V Ravichandran, Roaring Star Sri Murali and Nadabramha Hamsalekha, Ajay Rao, Sharan, Ragini Dwivedi, Sadhu Kokila, Nirup Bhandari, Rajvardhan, Dheeran Ramkuamr, Shahank, Chetan, Additional Director General of Police D Roopa also graced the function.

On the occasion, Tata said that his wife and he used to discuss Kannada movies. "We found that lack of marketing was the main cause of Kannada movies' failure. We have done some research on this subject. Now, we decided to launch six movies and encourage newcomers (both directors and actors). We want to continue bankrolling Kannada movies," said Tata.

Trailer unveiled

The trailer of the much-delayed Rajanivasa was unveiled by Karnataka Rakshana Vedike president TA Narayana Gowda. Actor Aditya, producer Uday K Mehta and prominent personalities of Sandalwood were present on the occasion. DP Anjanappa has bankrolled the movie in association with Lokesh Gowda. The movie is directed by Mithun. Raghav Naik and Krithika are the lead pair while Srinagar Kitty plays a cameo in the movie.

Gowda expressed concern

over the lean period in Sandalwood. "The failure of many Kannada movies at the box office is quite disturbing. I have been interacting with veterans of the Kannada film industry. I participated in pro-Kannada agitations along with Dr Rajkumar. I am thinking of felicitating veteran technicians and actors. I want to give Rs 1 lakh to each of the actors and technicians. I wish all the best to Anjanappa, the producer of Rajanivasa, who participated in pro-Kannada agitations," said Gowda.

Director Mithun said the trailer may remind people of Kantara, but the shooting of Rajanivasa began much before Kantara went on floors. "It took some time for us to wrap up the shooting. The delay made us reshoot some of the scenes," he said.